

The 'Taboo' Topic of Poverty

Tiffany Jackson

Past President, AASB and NSBA Board of Director Member

Timi Tullis

Director of Board Development and Field Services, AASB



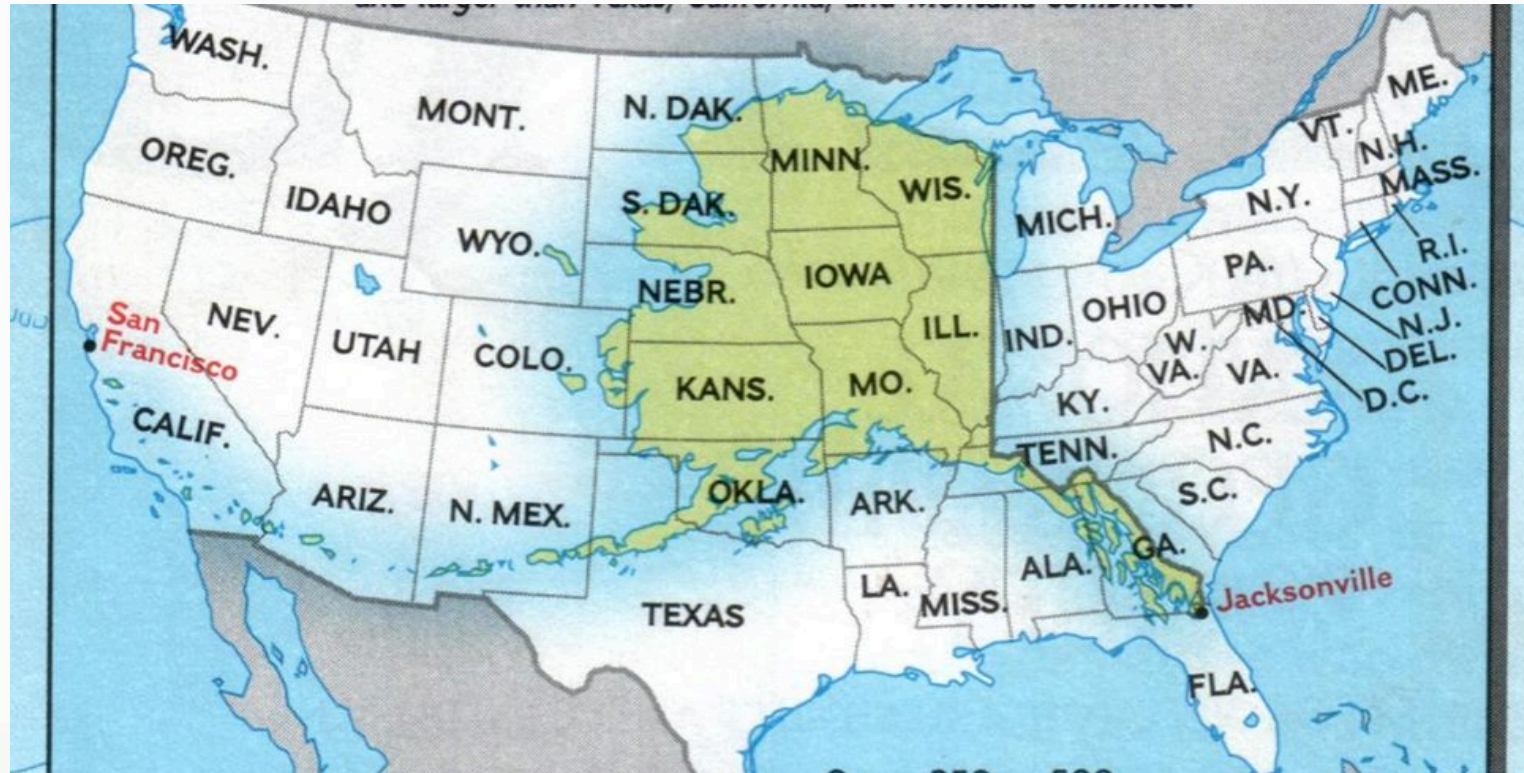
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Advocates for Alaska's Youth**

Workshop Objectives

- Participants will be able to lead a hands on activity that helps set the stage for a group when students in poverty is the topic.
- Participants will understand the long term effects that growing up in poverty has on students.
- Participants will learn many techniques that districts are using to help raise student achievement for students growing up in poverty.



Let's Get this Out of the Way



53 school districts covering 663,300 square miles. North Slope School District is 88,700 square miles, bigger than the state of Minnesota and 40 other states. Our smallest school district is Pelican with 13 students.



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Activity

- Think of a child/ren that is/are important to you.
- Use the bag of materials you were given, NO sharing, NO trading, **you can only use what you were given.**
- Draw or write words that would define SUCCESS for the child/ren you are thinking about, in other words, how will you know they have succeeded?
- You have 5 minutes!





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Key points

- Brain prioritizes survival first
- Stresses like poverty, (without some resiliency factors) can lead to measurable changes and deficits in brain development.



Students in Poverty are More Likely...

The kids who need
love the most ask
for it in the most
unloving of ways.

“

- to be retained in one or more grades
- to be assigned to lower tracks
- to be labeled as problem kids
- to be absent more often
- to earn lower scores on standardized tests
- to drop out of school without graduating

- John Biddle, 2001

Long term effects of poverty

- Increased risk for:
 - Childhood ADHD
 - Alcohol dependence and drug addiction
 - Explosive disorder
 - Major depression
 - PTSD



Opportunities

- Better nutrition-→ school breakfast and lunches
- After school and summer programs
- Intentional focus on building protective factors

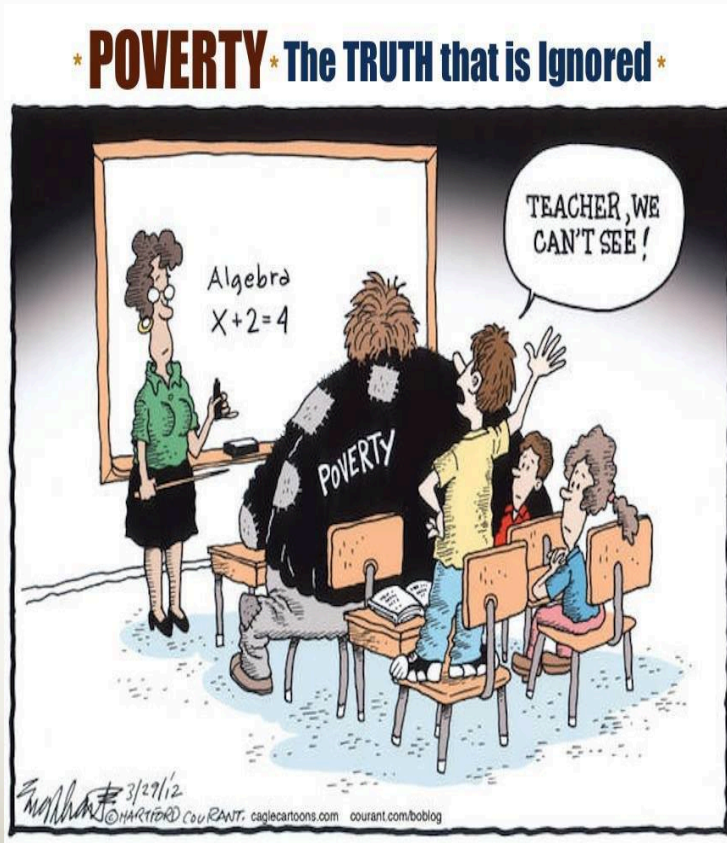


Schools can disrupt the cycle of poverty



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7 practices that are critical to student achievement for those in poverty



- Curriculum & Instruction
- Increase instructional time
- Investment in PD for teachers
- Systems to monitor student performance
- Parental involvement
- Accountability systems
- Use of assessment



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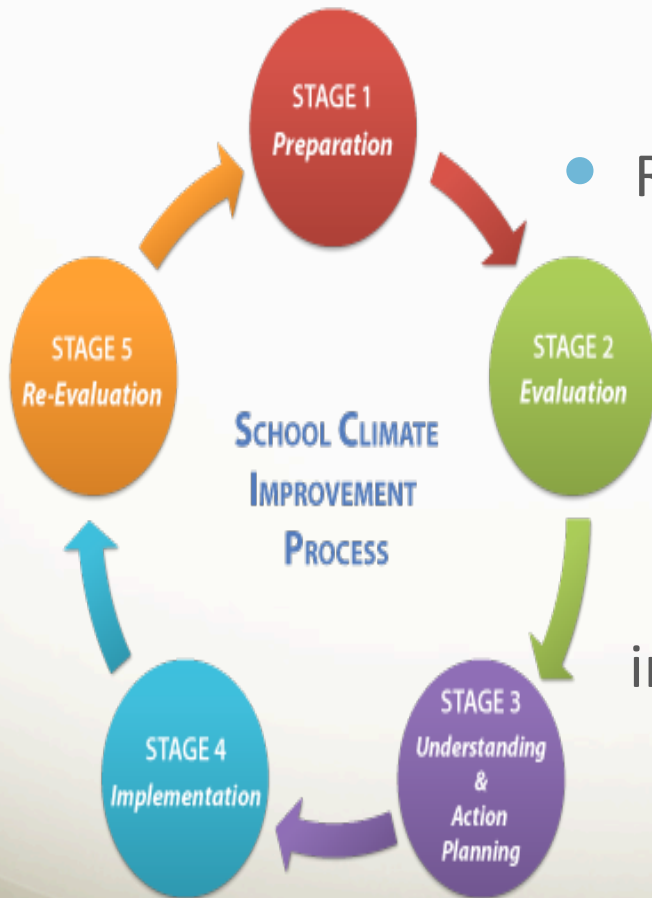
8 practices for improvement

- District leadership
- Engage families and communities
- HIGH expectations for poor and culturally diverse students
- Target low-performing students; start with reading
- Align, monitor and manage curriculum
- Create a culture of data and assessment
- Build and sustain instructional capacity
- Reorganize time, space and transitions



Alter the environment

- Change the school environment
- Reduce the parallels with prison.
- Reduce homework stress by incorporating time for homework in class or right after class.
- Use cooperative structures
- Help students blow off steam by incorporating celebrations, role-plays, and physical activities
- Incorporate kinesthetic arts



Empower students

- Help students increase their perception of control over their environment
- Introducing conflict resolution skills.
- Teaching students how to deal with anger and frustration
- Introducing responsibilities and the value of giving restitution.
- Teaching students to set goals to focus on what they want.



- Role-modeling how to solve real-world problems.
- Giving students a weekly life problem to solve collectively.
- Teaching social skills.
- Introducing stress reduction techniques

5 WAYS
to HELP STUDENTS
Affected by POVERTY:

- love them
- expose them to experiences
- give plenty of praise
- don't ask for money
- keep expectations high

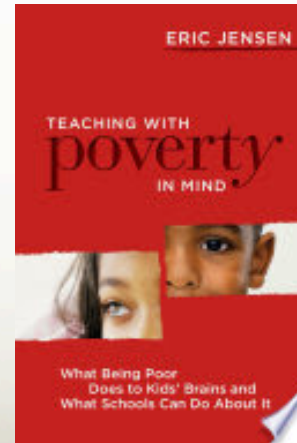
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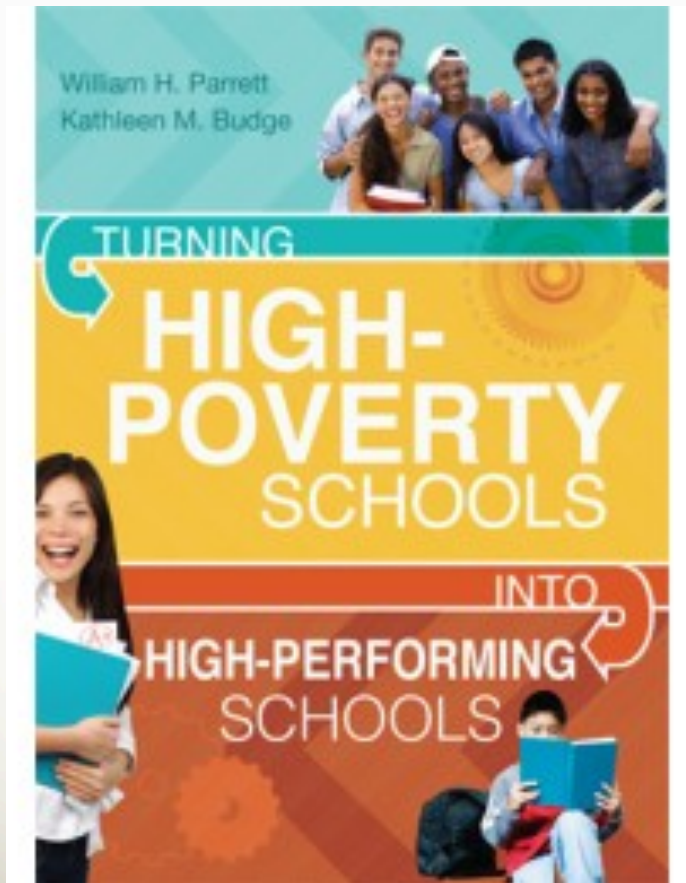
Build Core Skills

- Attention and focus skills
- Short and long term memory
- Sequencing and processing skills
- Problem solving skills
- Perseverance and ability to apply skills long term
- Social skills
- Hopefulness and self-esteem
 - *Eric Jensen Teaching with Poverty in Mind*



Thanks for coming!

William H Parrett and Kathleen M. Mudge~ authors



Timi C. Tullis
Director of Board Development and
Field Services, AASB
ttullis@aasb.org
907-463-1660



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